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The Pembroke Booklets

(First Series)

IV

Sir John Suckling
Ballads and other Poems

Sir Charles Sedley
Lyrics

John Wilmot
(Earl of Rochester)
Poems and Songs



J. R. Tutin
Hull
1906

Large Paper Edition, limited to 250 copies

Sir John Suckling

(1609-1642)

"O Suckling, *O gallant Sir John,
Thou gentleman poet, first plume of the ton ;
Fresh painter of ' Weddings,' great author of rare
' Poet Sessions' . . .*
O facile princeps of ' wit about town.'"

—LEIGH HUNT.

Sir Charles Sedley

(1639?-1701)

"*In his own sphere Sedley is unapproachable ; such songs as
' Love still has something of the sea' or ' Phillis is my only joy'
easily outdistance all rivals.*"—A. H. BULLEN.

John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester

(1647-1680)

"*I'm none of those who think themselves inspir'd,
Nor write with the vain hope to be admir'd,
But, from a rule I have (upon long trial),
T'avoid with care all sort of self-denial.
Which way so'er desire and fancy lead,
Contemning fame, that path I boldly tread.*"
—*Epistle to Lord Mulgrave.*

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Preface

SIR JOHN SUCKLING, son of a knight of the same name was born at Twickenham in February, 1608-9 AUBREY says of the father, who held various offices under the Crown, that he was but a dull fellow, and that the poet derived his wit from his mother. It is quite uncertain where he went to school, but in 1623 he entered Trinity College, Oxford, where he showed facility in learning languages and music. The elder Sir John died in 1627, and John took over his estates. Some travel abroad in 1628 was followed by a travelling of a more stirring kind in 1631, when he joined the Marquis of Hamilton's expedition, which sailed from Yarmouth, and took part in several battles and sieges, including that of Magdeburg. SUCKLING is said to have behaved well as a soldier, and spoke of himself as one in a poem of his.¹ He probably returned to England in 1633, and was soon in the swim and a leading figure at Court. His nimble tongue had many opportunities of exercise ; he was, SIR W. DAVENANT tells us, baited like a bull : "his repartee and witt being most sparkling when most set on and provok'd." Of the level of his table-talk we can conjecture from his letters and, still more, from his verses. There is no doubt that it was brilliant, and in a Court of taste and refinement like Charles I.'s it meant a social triumph. WINSTANLEY calls him "the darling of the Court."

As his poetry would suggest, SUCKLING was a great entertainer of the ladies, and never sent them away from his parties without costly gifts of silk stockings, jewelled garters, and gloves. But he had another and

¹ See p. 37.

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a less attractive hobby, that of gaming, and is said to have been reputed the best bowler and cardplayer in the kingdom. As he himself confesses in his "Sessions of the Poets"—

"Suckling next was called, but did not appear,
But straight one whisper'd Apollo i' th' ear,
That of all men living he cared not for 't,
He loved not the Muses so well as his sport."

One day his poor sisters came to the Piccadilly bowling-green, "crying for the fear he should lose all their fortunes." To show his elasticity of spirit, we are told that, when at his lowest ebb, he would put on his most glorious apparel. It may be questioned, however, if all the tall stories told of his extremes of good and ill fortune are true. In a romancing age like the Caroline any prominent person soon acquired his legend, and SUCKLING'S large estates must have been a mainstay.

SUCKLING no doubt had many passing *affaires de cœur* ("Out upon it, I have loved Three whole days together"), but one courtship was serious, that of the daughter of SIR HENRY WILLOUGHBY, who was a great heiress. As a letter which recently came to light at Clifton Hall, Notts, clearly proves,¹ the king used his influence in pushing the match, but unfortunately the lady herself did not agree, like a loyal subject, to accept his Majesty's favourite. To this passive resistance she added active, that is to say she asked another of her suitors to waylay SUCKLING and extort from him an engagement renouncing his attempts on her. This the suitor (DIGBY, a brother of SIR KENELM'S) did, with some allies, and poor SUCKLING received a sound drubbing. The affair caused great scandal, and, not having drawn sword, SUCKLING was accused of cowardice, and for some time was under a cloud socially. In 1637 came "The Sessions of the Poets," in which there is a good deal of hard hitting (sometimes in bad taste, as in DAVENANT'S case) and

¹ See *Daily Chronicle*, August 24th, 1905, and a note by the present writer, August 25th.

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acute criticism. I have already quoted the stanza in which he treats himself as severely as the others. In 1638 was produced *Aglaura*, said to be the first play acted with scenery, and *Brennoralt* the following year. SUCKLING'S part in the Scottish war may have lacked distinction, but SIR JOHN MENNIS'S celebrated ballad is obviously spiteful.

It would take too long to trace the political intrigues in which SUCKLING and the other "Staffordians" engaged to strengthen the King's power, and which compelled him, in order to escape a trial for high treason, to make a hurried departure for France. There are many stories of his life in exile—most of them probably false. One relates his having been in the clutches of the Spanish Inquisition. There are at least two accounts of his death : one that he was murdered by his valet putting a razor in his boot ; the second—unhappily, it seems, the true one—that he poisoned himself. His death occurred at Paris in May or June 1642.

The briefest and perhaps the most satisfactory criticism ever passed on him is that of Mistress Millamant in *The Way of the World*, "natural, easy Suckling." With a woman's intuition she at once perceives the two charms of his verse. When one thinks of the laboured love poetry, metaphysical and other, then being produced in great quantities, we may be thankful for "natural, easy Suckling," who had no affectation of simulating profundity by obscurity and crabbedness. Of course his poetry is superficial, but it shares that defect with beauty, which, we are always being told, is but skin-deep. But if he does not give us great thoughts, he always affords us entertainment, and a world without entertainment would be a dull place. He is singularly happy in the coinage of a phrase or a simile : it sticks in the memory :—

"Women enjoy'd (whate'er before t' have been)
Are like romances read or sights once seen."

"Love's a camelion that lives on mere air,
And surfeits when it comes to grosser fare."

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"Thinking on thee, thy beauties then,
As sudden lights do sleeping men,
So they by their bright rays awake me."

"'Tis Expectation makes a blessing dear,
Heaven were not Heaven, if we knew what it were."

Though some great poets have had no ear for music—TENNYSON, I believe, was one—SUCKLING'S musical gifts gave him an excellent mastery of rhythm; it were hard to find in him a single jarring line "out of tune and harsh." And then how wide his range of subject and treatment, how flexible his manner! Like Nanki-Poo in *The Mikado* he might have sung—

"My catalogue is long,
Through every passion ranging,
And to your humour changing
I tune my supple song."

The other two singers who contribute to this collection are, it must be said, somewhat monotonous both in subject and expression, though neither is lacking in wit and humour.

Let us now pass to one of these, SIR CHARLES SEDLEY, another of the seventeenth-century fine gentlemen who wrote with ease in the intervals between wenching, gaming, and drinking. He was born at Aylesford, Kent, about 1639, and went to Wadham College, Oxford, in 1655. After the Restoration he was elected (if the word can be used of what was probably a mere nomination) for New Romney. But he took little heed of senatorial dignity—such as it is—and his life was exactly like that of the other two poets of this volume, one of "wine, women, and song." We need not grumble: we may grant him the first two ingredients of his life, for we of to-day have the third for our delectation. SEDLEY, as is well known, was an actor in that scandalous scene at the Cock Tavern in Bow Street, in which some of the tipsy crew appeared on the balcony in a state of nature, and harangued the *ignobile vulgus* in the street below. That lark cost him a cool five hundred, and CHIEF-JUSTICE FOSTER improved the occasion by observing

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that it was for SEDLEY "and such wicked rascals as he was that God's anger and judgment hung over us." Alas for poor SEDLEY! history records but few of his good deeds, which is a way with that uncharitable Muse. In PEPYS (Feb. 1669) we find the irate poet thrashing KYNASTON, an actor who had the impudence to mimic him in face, voice, and dress on the stage. He married a daughter of the EARL OF RIVERS, and his own daughter achieved the distinction of being the DUKE OF YORK's favourite mistress. As his Royal Highness was said to prefer his wenches plain, this may not be saying much for the lady's beauty, but any how he made her COUNTESS OF DORCHESTER. SEDLEY's sporting career came to an end in a place of sport; his skull was fractured by the fall of the tennis court in the Haymarket.

He was a true singer, only a singer of trifles, however; his happiest efforts were inspired by a young lady called PHILLIS—only fifteen years old, if we are to believe one of his songs—and "Phillis is my only joy," wedded to a charming tune, bids fair to be immortal. How racy too his advice to her in her pious days:—

" 'Tis early to begin to fear
The Devil at fifteen."

CHARLES II. is said to have told him that nature had given him a patent to be Apollo's viceroy. His Majesty's repute for never saying a foolish thing is somewhat impaired by this remark.

JOHN WILMOT, EARL OF ROCHESTER, has long been regarded as a sort of awful example in company with other notorious historical characters, like Blue Beard, Captain Kidd, Alexander the Sixth, and the late Mr Charles Peace. He has had a worse fate still; he has been used for purposes of edification and put into penny tracts to turn the erring from their sinful ways; for he rashly let himself be converted towards the end of his life, and thus spoiled a high reputation for consistency. I can only briefly trace his career. Born 1647, he was at Wadham, Oxford, thereafter travelled in France, smelt powder in the

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attack on the Dutch fleet at Bergen, and returned to England to haunt the Court and alternately charm and infuriate the King. GRAMMONT records that at least once in each year he was sent packing, and, considering some unprintable epigrams on Charles, which no doubt reached their subject's ears, this is not surprising. He had a queer, mad life of it, always (when sober enough) in some outlandish escapade. Once he set up as a quack doctor with a booth on Tower Hill; at another—so ST. EVREMOND tells us—he and a bird of a feather, the DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM, took an inn on the Newmarket road, with a view to debauching all the women of the neighbourhood, a purpose which they are said to have achieved. He thought to repair his broken fortunes by a rich match, but the lady of his choice, ELIZABETH MALET, was not agreeable, so (in 1665) he waylaid her at Charing Cross, popped her into a coach, and was at Uxbridge before he was caught. This landed him in the Tower of London, but he was soon pardoned, and, curiously enough, married his victim a couple of years later. His known mistresses include ELIZABETH BARRY, whom he taught to act and put on the stage. His health broke down in 1679, and thenceforth he led a quieter life. There seems no doubt he was convinced of the error of his ways by BISHOP BURNETT. He had a fine lyric gift, and, though there is little enough sincerity in most of his love-songs, and he attains a cynical extreme in one in which he hails his mistress as worthy to serve all mankind, there is one poem, beginning "Why dost thou shade thy lovely face? O why," which suggests an almost passionate devotion. Had ROCHESTER criticised himself as acutely as he criticised others, in his satires, he might have been a better man. The only one of his long poems I have included is that on "Nothing," which is ingenious in its way.

WILLIAM G. HUTCHISON.

Sir John Suckling

Loving and Beloved

THERE never yet was honest Man
That ever drove the Trade of Love ;
It is impossible, nor can
Integrity our Ends promote ;
For Kings and Lovers are alike in this,
That their chief Art in Reign Dissembling is.

Here we are loved and there we love,
Good Nature now and Passion strive
Which of the two should be above,
And Laws unto the other give :
So we false Fire with Art sometimes discover,
And the true Fire with the same Art do cover.

What Rack can Fancy find so high ?
Here we must court and here engage ;
Though in the other Place we die,
Oh, 'tis Torture all, and Cosenage !
And which the harder is, I cannot tell,
To hide true Love, or make false Love look well.

Since it is thus, God of Desire,
Give me my Honesty again,
And take thy Brands back and thy Fire ;
I am weary of the state I am in :
Since (if the very best should now befall),
Love's Triumph must be Honour's Funeral.

Sir John Suckling

Sonnets

I

DOST see how unregarded now
That Piece of Beauty passes?
There was a Time when I did vow
To that alone ;
But mark the Fate of Faces ;
The Red and White works now no more on me,
Than if it could not charm, or I not see.

And yet the Face continues good,
And I have still Desires,
And still the self-same Flesh and Blood,
As apt to melt
And suffer from those Fires ;
O some kind Power unriddle where it lies—
Whether my Heart be faulty or her Eyes.

She every Day her Man does kill,
And I as often die ;
Neither her Power, then, nor my Will
Can question'd be ;
What is the mystery?
Sure, Beauty's Empires, like to greater States,
Have certain Periods set, and hidden Fates.

II

Of thee, kind Boy, I ask no Red and White
To make up my Delight :
No odd becoming Graces,
Black Eyes or little Know-not-whats in Faces ;
Make me but mad enough, give me good Store
Of Love for her I court—
I ask no more,
'Tis Love in Love that makes the Sport.

Sir John Suckling

There's no such Thing as that we Beauty call
It is mere Cosenage all ;
For though some long ago
Like t' certain Colours mingled so and so,
That doth not tie me now from choosing new,
If I a Fancy take
To Black and Blue,
That Fancy doth it Beauty make.

'Tis not the Meat, but 'tis the Appetite
Makes Eating a Delight,
And if I like one Dish
More than another, that a Pheasant is ;
What in our Watches, that in us is found ;
So to the Height and Nick
We up be wound,
No matter by what Hand or Trick.

III

O, for some honest Lover's Ghost,
Some kind, unbodied Post
Sent from the Shades below !
I strangely long to know,
Whether the nobler chaplets wear
Those that their Mistress' scorn did bear,
Or those that were used kindly.

For whatsoever they tell us here
To make those sufferings dear
'Twill there, I fear, be found
That to the being crown'd,
To have loved alone will not suffice,
Unless we also have been wise,
And have our Loves enjoy'd.

What Posture can we think him in
That here, unloved again,
Departs and's thither gone,
Where each sits by his own?

Sir John Suckling

Or how can that Elysium be
Where I my Mistress still must see
Circled in others' Arms ?

For there the Judges all are just,
And Sophonisba must
Be his whom she held dear,
Not his who loved her here.
The sweet Philoclea, since she died,
Lies by her Pirocles his side,
Not by Amphialus.

Some Bays, perchance, or Myrtle Bough,
For difference crowns the Brow
Of those kind souls that were
The noble Martyrs here ;
And if that be the only Odds,
(As who can Tell?) ye kinder Gods,
Give me the Woman here.

THERE never yet was Woman made,
Nor shall, but to be cursed,
And O ! that I, fond I, should first
Of any Lover
This Truth at my Own Charge to other Fools discover !

You that have promised to yourselves
Propriety in Love,
Know Women's Hearts like Straw do move ;
And what we call
Their Sympathy is but Love to get in general.

All Mankind are alike to them,
And though we Iron find
That never with a Loadstone joined,
'Tis not the Iron's Fault,
It is because near the Loadstone yet it was never
brought.

Sir John Suckling

If where a gentle Bee hath fallen,
And labour'd to his Power,
A new succeeds not to that Flow'r,
But passes by,
'Tis to be thought, the Gallant elsewhere loads his
Thigh.

For still the Flowers ready stand,
One buzzes round about,
One lights, one tastes, gets in, gets out ;
All always use them,
Till all their sweets are gone, and all again refuse them.

*Scire se liceret quæ debes subire
Et non subire, pulchrum est scire
Sed si subire debes quæ debes scire
Quersum vis scire, nam debes subir*

IF Man might know
The Ill he must undergo,
And shun it so,
Then it were good to know
But if he undergo it,
Though he know it,
What boots him know it
He must undergo it.

Against Fruition

STAY here, fond Youth, and ask no more, be wise :
Knowing too much long since lost Paradise.
The virtuous Joys thou hast, thou would'st should still
Last in their Pride ; and would'st not take it ill
If rudely from sweet Dreams (and for a Toy)
Thou wert awak'd? He wakes himself that does
enjoy.

Sir John Suckling

Fruition adds no new Wealth, but destroys,
And, while it pleaseth much the Palate, cloyes ;
Who thinks he shall be happier for that
As reasonably might hope he might grow fat
By eating to a Surfeit ; this once past,
What relishes ? even Kisses lose their Taste.

Urge not 'tis necessary, alas ! we know
The homeliest Thing which Mankind does is so ;
The World is of a vast Extent, we see,
And must be peopled ; children there must be ;
So must Bread too ; but since there are enough
Born to the Drudgery, what need we plough ?

Women enjoy'd (whate'er before t' have been)
Are like Romances read, or Sights once seen ;
Fruition's dull, and spoils the Play much more,
Than if one read or knew the Plot before ;
'Tis Expectation makes a Blessing dear,
Heaven were not Heaven if we knew what it were.

And as in Prospects we are there pleased most
Where something keeps the Eye from being lost,
And leaves us Room to guess ; so here Restraint
Holds up Delight that with Excess would faint.
They who know all the Wealth they have are poor,
He's only rich that cannot tell his Store.

Another of the Same, against Fruition

FIE upon Hearts that burn with mutual Fire :
I hate two Minds that breathe but one Desire :
Were I to curse th' unhallowed sort of Men,
I'd wish them to love and be lov'd again.
Love's a Camelion, that lives on mere Air ;
And surfeits when it comes to grosser Fare :

Sir John Suckling

'Tis petty Jealousies and little Fears,
Hopes join'd with Doubts, and Joys with April Tears,
That crowns our Love with Pleasures : these are
gone

When once we come to full fruition.
Like waking in a Morning when all Night
Our Fancy hath been fed with true Delight.
Oh ! what a Stroke 'twould be ! sure I should die,
Should I but hear my Mistress once say ay.
That Monster Expectation feeds too high
For any Woman e'er to satisfy :
And no brave Spirit ever cared for that
Which in down Beds with Ease he could come at :
She's but an honest Whore that yields, although
She be as cold as Ice, as pure as Snow :
He that enjoys her hath no more to say,
But keeps us fasting, if you'll have us pray.
Then, fairest Mistress, hold the Power you have
By still denying what we still do crave :
In keeping us in Hopes strange Things to see
That never were, nor are, nor e'er shall be.

LOVE, Reason, Hate did once bespeak
Three Mates to play at Barley-break.
Love Folly took, and Reason Fancy ;
And Hate consorts with Pride ; so dance they.
Love coupled last, and so it fell
That Love and Folly were in Hell.

They break, and Love would Reason meet,
But Hate was nimbler on her feet :
Fancy looks for Pride and whither
Hies, and they two hug together,
Yet this new coupling still doth tell
That Love and Folly were in Hell.

The rest do break again, and Pride
Hath now got Reason on her side ;

Sir John Suckling

Hate and Fancy meet, and stand
Untouch'd by Love in Folly's hand :
Folly was dull, but Love ran well,
So Love and Folly were in Hell.

'TIS now since I sat down before
That foolish Fort a Heart,
(Time strangely spent) a Year and more,
And still I did my Part.

Made my Approaches, from her Hand,
Unto her Lip did rise,
And did already understand
The Language of her Eyes.

Proceeded on with no less Art,
My Tongue was Engineer ;
I thought to undermine the Heart
By whispering in the Ear.

When this did Nothing, I brought down
Great cannon-oaths, and shot
A thousand thousand to the Town,
And still it yielded not.

I then resolv'd to starve the Place
By cutting off all kisses,
Praying and gazing in her Face,
And all such little Blissess.

To draw her out, and from her Strength,
I drew all Batteries in,
And brought myself to lie at length
As if no siege had been.

When I had done what Man could do,
And thought the Place mine own,
The Enemy lay quiet too
And smiled at all was done.

Sir John Suckling

I sent to know from whence and where
These Hopes and this Relief?
A Spy inform'd, Honour was there
And did command in Chief.

March, march, quoth I, the Word straight give,
Let's lose no Time but leave her ;
That Grant upon Air will live,
And hold it out for ever.

To such a Place our Camp remove,
As will no Siege abide ;
I hate a Fool that starves her Love,
Only to feed her Pride.

Ballad on a Wedding

I TELL thee, Dick, where I have been,
Where I the rarest Things have seen,
O, Things without Compare !
Such Sights again cannot be found
In any Place on English Ground,
Be it at Wake or Fair.

At Charing Cross, hard by the Way
Where we (thou know'st) do sell our Hay
There is a House with Stairs ;
And there did I see coming down
Such Folk as are not in our Town,
Forty, at least, in Pairs.

Amongst the rest one pest'lent fine
(His Beard no bigger though than thine)
Walk'd on before the Best ;
Our Landlord looks like nothing to him
The King (God bless him !) 'twould undo him
Should he go still so drest.

Sir John Suckling

At Course-a-Park, without all Doubt
He should have first been taken out
By all the Maids i' th' Town :
Though lusty Roger there had been,
Or Little George upon the Green,
Or Vincent of the Crown.

But wot you what? the Youth was going
To make an End of all the wooing ;
The Parson for him stay'd ;
Yet by his Leave (for all his Haste)
He did not so much wish all past
(Perchance) as did the Maid.

The Maid, (and thereby hangs a Tale),
For such a Maid no Whitsun Ale
Could ever yet produce :
No Grape, that's kindly ripe, could be
So round, so plump, so soft as she,
Nor half so full of Juice.

Her Finger was so small, the Ring
Would not stay on, which they did bring,
It was too wide a Peck,
And, to say Truth, (for out it must),
It looked like the great Collar just
About our young colt's Neck.

Her Feet beneath her Petticoat,
Like little Mice, stole in and out,
As if they fear'd the Light ;
But O ! she dances such a Way,
No Sun upon an Easter-day
Is half so fine a Sight.

He would have kissed her once or twice
But she would not, she was so nice,
She would not do't in Sight,
And then she look'd as who should say :
I will do what I list to-day
And you shall do't at Night.

Sir John Suckling

Her Cheeks so rare a White was on,
No Daisy makes Comparison,
 (Who sees them is undone),
For Streaks of Red were mingled there
Such as are on a Catherine Pear,
 (The Side that's next the Sun).

Her Lips were Red and one was thin
Compar'd to that was next her Chin
 (Some Bee had stung it newly)
But, Dick, her Eyes so guard her Face,
I durst no more upon them gaze
 Than on the Sun in July.

Her Mouth so small, when she does speak,
Thou'dst swear her Teeth her Words did break,
 That they might Passage get,
But she so handled still the Matter,
They came as good as ours, or better,
 And are not spent a Whit.

If Wishing should be any Sin,
The Parson himself had guilty been
 (She looked that Day so purely);
And did the Youth so oft the Feat
At Night, as some did in concert,
 It would have spoil'd him surely.

Just in the Nick the Cook knocked thrice,
And all the Waiters in a trice
 His Summons did obey;
Each Serving-man, with Dish in Hand
March'd boldly up like our train'd Band,
 Presented and away.

When all the Meat was on the Table
What Man of Knife or Teeth was able
 To stay to be intreated?
And this the very Reason was:
Before the Parson could say Grace,
 The Company was seated.

Sir John Suckling

The Business of the Kitchen's great
For it is fit that Men should eat ;
Nor was it there deny'd ;
Passion o' me, how I run on !
There's that that would be thought upon
(I trow) beside the Bride.

Now Hats fly off and Youths carouse,
Healts first go round and then the House,
The Bride's came thick and thick :
And when 'twas nam'd another's Health,
Perhaps he made it hers by stealth,
And who could help it, Dick?

On the sudden up, they rise and dance ;
Then sit again and sigh and glance,
Then dance again and kiss :
Thus several Ways the Time did pass
Whil'st ev'ry Woman wish'd her place
And ev'ry Man wish'd his.

By this Time all were stolen aside,
To counsel and undress the Bride ;
But that he must not know,
But yet 'twas thought he guess'd her Mind,
And did not mean to stay behind
Above an Hour or so.

When he came in, Dick, there she lay
Like new fall'n snow melting away,
('Twas Time, I trow, to part)
Kisses were now the only Stay
Which soon she gave as who would say
God b' w' y' ! with all my Heart.

But just as Heav'n would have to cross it
In came the Bride with the Posset :
The Bridegroom ate in spite,
For, had he left the Women to't,
It would have cost two Hours to do't,
Which were too much that Night.

Sir John Suckling

At length the candle's out, and now
All that they had not done they do :
What that is who can tell?
But I believe it was no more
Than thou and I have done before
With Bridget and with Nell.

HONEST Lover, whatsoever,
If in all thy Love there ever
Was one wav'ring Thought, if thy Flame
Were not still even, still the same :

Know this,
Thou lov'st amiss,
And, to love true,
Thou must begin again, and love anew.

If when she appears i' th' Room,
Thou dost not quake and are struck dumb,
And in striving this to cover,
Dost not speak thy Words twice over,

Know this,
Thou lov'st amiss,
And to love true
Thou must begin again, and love anew.

If fondly thou dost not mistake,
And all Defects for Graces take,
Persuad'st thyself that Jest's are broken,
When she has Little or Nothing spoken,

Know this,
Thou lov'st amiss,
And to love true
Thou must begin again and love anew.

If when thou appear'st to be within,
Thou let'st Men ask and ask again ;
And when thou answerest, if it be,
To what was asked thee, properly,

Sir John Suckling

Know this,
Thou lov'st amiss,
And to love true
Thou must begin and love anew.

If when thy Stomach calls to eat,
Thou cutt'st not Fingers 'stead of Meat,
And with much gazing on her Face
Dost not rise hungry from the Place,
Know this,
Thou lov'st amiss,
And, to love true,
Thou must begin again and love anew.

If by this thou dost discover
That thou art no perfect Lover,
And, desiring to love true,
Thou dost begin to love anew :
Know this,
Thou lov'st amiss,
And, to love true,
Thou must begin again and love anew.

OUT upon it, I have loved
Three whole Days together ;
And am like to love three more,
If it prove fair Weather.

Time shall moult away his Wings,
Ere he shall discover
In the whole wide World again
Such a constant Lover.

But the Spite on't, is, no Praise
Is due at all to me :
Love with me had made no Stays,
Had it any been but she.

Sir John Suckling

Had it any been but she,
And that very Face,
There had been at least ere this
A dozen dozen in her Place.

Love turn'd to Hatred

I WILL not love one Minute more, I swear,
No, not a Minute ; nor a Sigh or Tear
Thou gett'st from me, or one kind look again,
Though thou should'st court me to't, and would'st
begin.

I will not think of thee, but as Men do
Of Debts and Sins, and then I'll curse thee too.
For thy sake Women shall be now to me
Less welcome than as Midnight Ghosts shall be :
I'll hate so perfectly, that it shall be
Treason to love that Man that loves a she ;
Nay, I will hate the very Good, I swear,
That's in thy Sex, because it doth lie there ;
Their very virtue, Grace, Discourse and Wit,
And all for thee ; what, wilt thou love me yet ?

The Careless Lover

NEVER believe me if I love,
Or know what 'tis, or mean to prove ;
And yet in Faith, I lie, I do,
And she's extremely handsome too,
She's fair, she's wondrous fair,
But I care not who know it :
Ere I'll die for Love, I'll fairly forego it.

This Heat of Hope or Cold or Fear
My foolish Heart could never bear :

Sir John Suckling

One Sigh imprison'd ruins more
Than Earthquakes have done heretofore :
She's fair, etc.

When I am hungry, I do eat
And cut no Fingers 'stead of meat ;
Nor, with much Gazing on her Face
Do e'er rise hungry from the Place.
She's fair, etc.

A gentle Round fill'd to the Brink
To this and t'other Friend I drink ;
And when 'tis nam'd another's Health,
I never make it hers by Stealth.
She's fair, etc.

Blackfriars to me and old Whitehall
Is even as much as is the Fall
Of Fountains on a pathless Grove,
And nourishes as much my Love.
She's fair, etc.

I visit, talk, do Business, play,
And, for a need, laugh out a Day :
Who does not thus in Cupid's school,
He makes not Love, but plays the Fool.
She's fair, etc.

Love and Debt alike Troublesome

THIS one Request I make to him that sits the Clouds
above,
That I were freely out of Debt, as I am out of Love ;
Then for to dance, to drink and sing, I should be very
willing,
I should not owe a Lass a Kiss, nor ne'er a Knave a
Shilling.

Sir John Suckling

'Tis only being in Love and Debt that breaks us of
our Rest,
And he that is quite out of both, of all the World is
blest :
He sees the Golden Age, wherein all Things were
free and common,
He eats, he drinks, he takes his Rest, he fears no Man
or Woman.
Though Cræsus compassed great Wealth, yet he still
craved more,
He was as needy a Beggar still, as goes from Door to
Door.
Though Ovid were a merry Man, Love ever kept him
sad,
He was as far from Happiness as one that is stark
mad.
Our Merchant, he in Goods is rich, and full of Gold
and Treasure,
But when he thinks upon his Debts, that Thought de-
stroys his Pleasure.
Our Courtier thinks that he's preferr'd, whom every
Man envies ;
When Love so rumbles in his Pate, no Sleep comes in
his Eyes.
Our Gallant's Case is worst of all, he lies so just be-
twixt them,
For he's in Love and he's in Debt, and knows not
which most vex'th him.
But he that can eat Beef and feed on Bread which is
so brown,
May satisfy his Appetite, and owe no man a Crown :
And he that is content with Lasses clothed in plain
Woollen,
May cool his Heat in every Place, he need not to be
sullen,
Nor sigh for Love of Lady fair ; for this each wise
Man knows :
As good Stuff under Flannel lies as under silken
Clothes.

Sir John Suckling

Love's Representation

LEANING her Head upon my Breast
There on Love's Bed she lay to rest ;
My panting Heart rock'd her asleep,
My heedful Eyes the Watch did keep ;
Then Love by me being harbour'd there,
In Hope to be his Harbinger,
Desire his Rival kept the Door,
For this of him I begged no more,
But that our Mistress to entertain,
Some pretty Fancy he would frame,
And represent it in a Dream
Of which myself should give the Theme.
Then first these Thoughts I bid him show
Which only he and I did know,
Array'd in Duty and Respect,
And not in Fancies that reflect,
Then those of Value next present,
Approv'd by all the World's Consent ;
But to distinguish mine asunder,
Apparell'd they must be in Wonder.
Such a Device then I would have
As Service, not Reward, should crave,
Attir'd in spotless Innocence,
Not Self-respect, nor no Pretence ;
Then such a Faith I would have shown
And heretofore was never known.
Cloth'd with a constant, clear Intent,
Professing always as it meant ;
And if Love no such Garments have,
My Mind a Wardrobe is so brave,
That there sufficient he may see
To clothe Impossibility.
Then beamy Fetters he shall find,
By Admiration subtly twined,
That will keep fast the wanton'st Thought
That e'er Imagination wrought :

Sir John Suckling

There he shall find of Joy a Chain,
Framed by Despair of her Disdain
So curiously that it can't tie
The smallest Hopes that Thoughts now spy.
There Acts, as glorious as the Sun,
Are by her Veneration spun,
In one of which I would have brought
A pure, unspotted, abstract Thought.
Considering her as she is good,
Not in her Frame of Flesh and Blood ;
These Atoms, then, all in her Sight,
I bade him join, that so he might
Discern between true Love's Creation
And that Love's Form that's now in Fashion.
Love, granting unto my Request,
Began to labour in my Breast ;
But with this Motion he did make,
It heaved so high that she did wake,
Blush'd at the Favour she had done,
Then smiled and then away did run.

To a Lady who forbade to love before Company

WHAT ! no more Favours ? Not a Ribbon more,
Not Fan nor Muff to hold as heretofore ?
Must all the little Blissess then be left,
And what was once Love's Gift, become our Theft ?
May we not look ourselves into a Trance,
Teach our Souls Parley at our Eyes, not glance,
Not touch the Hand, not by soft Wringing there
Whisper a Love that only yes can hear ?
Not free a Sigh, a Sigh that's there for you ?
Dear, must I love you, and not love you too ?
Be wise, nice, fair : for sooner shall they trace
The feather'd Choristers from Place to Place,

Sir John Suckling

By Points they make in th' Air, and sooner say
By what right Line the last Star made his Way
That fled from Heaven to Earth, than guess to know
How our Loves first did spring, or how they grow.
Love is all Spirit : Fairies sooner may
Be taken tardy when they Night-tricks play,
Than we, we are too dull and lumpish rather. . . .

THE crafty Boy that had full oft assay'd
To pierce my stubborn and resisting Breast,
But still the Bluntness of his Darts betray'd,
Resolv'd at last of setting up his Rest,
Either my wild, unruly Heart to tame,
Or quit his Godhead and his Bow disclaim.

So all his lovely Looks, his pleasing Fires,
All his sweet Motions, all his taking Smiles,
All that awakes, all that inflames Desires,
All that by sweet Commands, all that beguiles,
He does into one Pair of Eyes convey,
And there begs Leave that he himself may stay.

And there he brings me where his Ambush lay,
Secure and careless to a stranger Land ;
And, never warning me, which was foul Play,
Does make me close by all this Beauty stand.
Where first struck dead, I did at last recover,
To know that I might only live to love her.

So I'll be sworn I do, and do confess
The blind Lad's Power whilst he inhabits there ;
But I'll be even with him nevertheless,
If e'er I chance to meet with him elsewhere.
If other Eyes invite the Boy to tarry,
I'll fly to hers as to a Sanctuary.

Sir John Suckling

I PRITHEE send me back my Heart,
Since I cannot have thine,
For, if from yours you will not part,
Why then should'st thou have mine?

Yet, now I think on't, let it lie
To find it were in vain,
For th' hast a Thief in either Eye
Would steal it back again.

Why should two Hearts in one Breast lie,
And yet not lodge together?
O Love where is thy Sympathy
If thus our Breasts thou sever?

But Love is such a Mystery,
I cannot find it out;
For when I think I'm best resolv'd,
I then am in most Doubt.

Then Farewell Care and Farewell Woe,
I will no longer pine:
For I'll believe I have her Heart,
As much as she hath mine.

I AM confirm'd a Woman can
Love this, or that, or any Man;
This Way she's melting hot,
To-morrow swears she knows you not;
If she but a new Object find,
Then straight she's of another Mind.
Then hang me, Ladies, at your Door,
If e'er I dote upon you more.

If still I love the fairsome (why?
For nothing but to please my Eye);

Sir John Suckling

And so the fat and soft-skin'd Dame
I'll flatter to appease my Flame ;
For she that's musical I'll long
When I am sad to sing a Song,
Then hang me, Ladies, at your Door,
If e'er I dote upon you more.

I'll give my Fancy Leave to range
Through everywhere to find out Change,
The Black, the Brown, the Fair shall be
But Objects of Variety :
I'll court you all to serve my Turn,
But with such Flames as shall not burn—
Then hang me, Ladies, at your Door,
If e'er I dote upon you more.

I PRITHEE spare me, gentle Boy,
Press me no more for that slight Toy,
That foolish Trifle of a Heart ;
I swear it will not do its Part,
Though thou dost thine, employ'st thy Power and Art.

For through long Custom it has known
The little Secrets, and is grown
Sullen and wise, will have its Will,
And, like old Hawks, pursues that still
That makes least Sport, flies only where't can kill.

Some Youth that has not made his Story,
Will think, perchance, the Pain's the Glory ;
And mannerly fit out Love's Feast ;
I shall be carving of the best,
Rudely call for the last Course 'fore the Rest.

Sir John Suckling

And, O, when once that Course is past,
How short a Time the Feast doth last !
Men rise away, and scarce say Grace,
Or civilly once thank the Face
That did invite, but seek another Place.

WHEN, dearest, I but think of thee,
Methinks all Things that lovely be
Are present and my Soul delighted :
For Beauties that from Worth arise
Are like the Grace of Deities,
Still present, though unsighted.

Thus whilst I sit and sigh the Day
With all his borrowed Lights away,
Till Night's black Wings do overtake me,
Thinking on thee, thy Beauties then,
As sudden Lights do sleeping Men,
So they by their bright Rays awake me.

Thus Absence dies, and dying proves
No Absence can subsist with Loves
That do partake of fair Perfection ;
Since in the darkest Night they may
By Love's quick Motion find a Way
To see each other by Reflection.

The waving Sea can with each Flood
Bathe some high Promont that hath stood
Far from the Main up in the River :
Oh, think not then but Love can do
As much, for that's an Ocean too,
Which flows not every day but ever !

HAST thou seen the Down in the Air
When wanton Blasts have toss'd it ?
Or the Ship on the Sea,
When ruder Winds have cross'd it ?

Sir John Suckling

Hast thou mark'd the Crocodile's Weeping,
Or the Fox's Sleeping?
Or hast viewed the Peacock in his Pride,
Or the Dove by his Bride,
When he courts for his Lechery?
O so fickle, O so vain, O so false, so false is she!
—*The Sad One*, Act IV. sc. iii.

His Dream

ON a still silent Night scarce could I number
One of the Clock, but that a golden Slumber
Had locked my Senses fast, and carried me
Into a World of blest Felicity,
I know not how: first to a Garden, where
The Apricot, the Cherry, and the Pear,
The Strawberry and Plum, were fairer far
Than that eye-pleasing Fruit that caused the Jar
Betwixt the Goddesses, and tempted more
Than fair Atlanta's Ball, though gilded o'er.

I gazed awhile on these, and presently
A silver Stream ran softly gliding by,
Upon whose Banks, Lilies more white than Snow,
New fallen from Heaven, with Violets mixed, did
grow;
Whose Scent so chafed the Neighbour-air, that you
Would softly swear that Arabic Spices grew
Not far from thence, or that the Place had been
With Musk prepared, to entertain Love's Queen.
Whilst I admired, the River passed away,
And up a Grove did spring, green as in May.

When April had been moist; upon whose Bushes
The pretty Robins, Nightingales and Thrushes
Warbled their Notes so sweetly, that my Ears
Did judge at least the Music of the Spheres.

Sir John Suckling

But here my gentle Dream conveyed me
Into the Place where I most longed to see,
My Mistress' Bed ; who some few Blushes past
And smiling Frowns, contented was at last
To let me Touch her Neck ; I, not content
With that, slipped to her Breasts, . . .
And then—I waked.

Brennoralt Gazing on Francelia Asleep

So Misers look upon their Gold, which while
They joy to see, they fear to lose ; the Pleasure
O' the Sight scarce equalling the Jealousy
Of being dispossess'd by Others.
Her Face is like the Milky Way i' th' Sky,
A Meeting of gentle Lights without Name.
Heavens ! shall this fresh Ornament
Of the World, this precious Loveliness
Pass, with other common Things, among'st
The Wastes of Time ? What Pity 'twere !
—*Brennoralt*, Act III.

Sir John Suckling

No, no, fair Heretic, it needs must be
But an Ill-love in me
And worse for thee.
For were it in my Pow'r,
To love thee now this Hour
More than I did the last :
I would then so fall
I might not love at all.
Love that can flow and can admit Increase,
Admits as well an Ebb, and may grow less.

True Love is still the same, the torrid Zones,
And those more frigid ones,
It must not know.
For Love grown cold or hot
Is Lust or Friendship, not
The Thing we have.
For that's a Flame would die,
Held down or up too high :
Then think I love more than I can express,
And would love more, could I but love thee less.
—*Aglaura*, Act. IV. sc. i.

The Metamorphosis

THE little Boy, to show his Might and Power,
Turn'd Io to a Cow, Narcissus to a Flower ;
Transform'd Apollo to a homely Swain,
And Jove himself into a Golden Rain.
These Shapes were tolerable, but, by the Mass,
He's metamorphos'd me into an Ass.

Sir John Suckling

A Soldier

I AM a Man of War and Might
And know thus much that I can fight,
Whether I am i' th' Wrong or Right,
Devoutly.

No woman under Heaven I fear,
New Oaths I can exactly swear,
And forty Healths my Brain will bear
Most stoutly.

I cannot speak, but I can do
As much as any of our Crew,
And, if you doubt it, some of you
May prove me.

I dare be bold thus much to say,
If that my Bullets do but play,
You would be hurt so Night and Day,
Yet love me.

The Expostulation

TELL me, ye juster Deities,
That pity Lovers' Miseries,
Why should my own Unworthiness
Fright me to seek my Happiness?
It is as natural as just
Him for to love, whom needs I must
All Men confess that Love's a Fire,
Then who denies it to aspire?

Tell me if thou wert Fortune's Thrall,
Would'st thou not raise thee from the Fall?

Sir John Suckling

Seek only to o'erlook thy State,
Whereto thou art condemn'd by Fate?
Then let me love my Corydon,
By Love's Leave, him love alone :
For I have read of Stories oft
That Love hath Wings, and soars aloft.

Then let me grow in my Desire,
Though I be martyr'd in that Fire ;
For Grace it is enough for me
But only to love such as he :
For never shall my Thoughts be base,
Though luckless, yet without Disgrace :
Then let him that my Love shall blame
Or clip Love's Wings or quench Love's Flame.

To Master John Hales of Eton

SIR,
Whether these Lines do you find out
Putting or clearing of a Doubt,
(Whether Predestination
Or reconciling Three in One,
Or the Unriddling how Men die,
And live at once eternally
Now take you up) know 'tis decreed
You straight bestride the College-steed :
Leave Socinus and the Schoolmen
(Which Jack Bond swears do but fool Men),
And come to Town ; 'tis fit you show
Yourself abroad, that Men may know
(Whate'er some learned Men have guess'd)
That Oracles are not yet ceas'd :
There you shall find the Wit and Wine
Flowing alike and both divine—

Sir John Suckling

Dishes with Names not known in Books,
And less among the College-Cooks,
With Sauce so pregnant that you need
Not stay till Hunger bids you feed.
The Sweat of learned Jonson's Brain,
And gentle Shakespeare's easier Strain,
A Hackney-coach conveys you to,
In Spite of all that Rain can do ;
And for your Eighteenpence you sit
The Lord and Judge of all fresh Wit.
News in one Day as much w^t have here
As serves all Windsor for a Year,
And which the Carrier brings to you
After t' has here been found not true.
Then think what Company's design'd
To meet you here, Men so refin'd ;
Their very common talk at Board
Makes wise or mad a young Court-lord,
And makes him capable to be
Umpire in's Father's Company.
Where no Disputes nor forced Defence
Of a Man's Person for his Sense
Take up the Time ; all strive to be
Masters of Truth, as Victory :
And where you come, I'd boldly swear
A Synod might as eas'ly err.

WHY so pale and wan, fond Lover ?
Prithee, why so pale ?
Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail ?
Prithee, why so pale ?

Why so dull and mute, young Sinner ?
Prithee, why so mute ?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do 't ?
Prithee, why so mute ?

Sir John Suckling

Quit, quit, for Shame, this will not move,
This cannot take her.
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her—
The Devil take her !
—*Aglaura*, Act IV. sc. i.

FILL it up, fill it up to the Brink,
When the Pots cry Clink,
And the Pockets chink,
Then 'tis a merry World !

To the best, to the best, have at her !
And a Pox take the Woman-hater !
The Prince of Darkness is a Gentleman :
Mahu, *Mahu*¹ is his Name.
—*The Goblins*, Act III.

COME, let the State stay,
And drink away :
There is no Business above it,
It warms the cold Brain,
Makes us speak in high Strain :
He's a Fool that does not approve it.
The Macedon Youth
Left behind him this Truth,
That Nothing is done with much Thinking,—
He drank and he fought
Till he had what he sought,
The World was his own by hard Drinking.
—*Brennoralt*, Act II. sc. i.

¹ This comes from *King Lear* (III. iv.) where poor Tom sings—

“The Prince of Darkness is a gentleman,
Modo he's called and Mahu.”

Elsewhere, however (IV. i.), he is the tributary fiend of theft.

Sir John Suckling

SHE'S pretty to walk with,
And witty to talk with,
And pleasant too to think on ;
But the best Use of all
Is, her Health is a Stale,
And helps us to make us drink on.
Brennoralt, Act II. sc. 1.

Sir Charles Sedley

PHILLIS, Men say that all my Vows
Are to thy Fortune paid ;
Alas ! my Heart he little knows
Who thinks my Love a Trade.

Were I of all these Woods the Lord,
One Berry from thy Hand
More real Pleasure would afford
Than all my large Command.

My humble Love has learnt to live
On what the nicest Maid,
Without a conscious Blush, may give
Beneath the Myrtle Shade.

PHILLIS is my only Joy,
Faithless as the Winds or Seas,
Sometimes coming, sometimes coy,
Yet she never fails to please ;
If with a Frown
I am cast down,
Phillis smiling
And beguiling,
Makes me happier than before.

Though, alas ! too late I find
Nothing can her Fancy fix,
Yet the Moment she is kind,
I forgive her all her Tricks ;

Sir Charles Sedley

Which, though I see,
I can't get free ;
She deceiving,
I believing :
What need Lovers wish for more ?

HEARS not my Phillis how the Birds
Their feather'd Mates salute ?
They tell their Passion in their Words :
Must I alone be mute ?
*Phillis, without Frown or Smile,
Sat and knotted all the while.*

The God of Love in thy bright Eyes
Does like a Tyrant reign,
But in thy Heart a Child he lies
Without his Dart or Flame.
*Phillis, without Frown or Smile,
Sat and knotted all the while.*

So many Months in Silence pass'd
And yet in raging Love,
Might well deserve one Word at last
My Passion should approve.
*Phillis, without Frown or Smile,
Sat and knotted all the while.*

Must then your faithful Swain expire,
And not one Look obtain,
Which he, to soothe his fond Desire,
Might pleasingly explain ?
*Phillis, without Frown or Smile,
Sat and knotted all the while.*

Sir Charles Sedley

To a Devout Young Gentlewoman

PHILLIS, this early Zeal assuage,
You over-act your Part ;
The Martyrs at your Tender Age
Gave Heav'n but half their Heart.

Old Men (till past the Pleasure) ne'er
Declaim against the Sin ;
'Tis early to begin to fear
The Devil at Fifteen.

The World to Youth is too severe,
And, like a treacherous Light,
Beauty the Actions of the Fair
Exposes to their Sight.

And yet this World, as old as 'tis,
Is oft deceived by 't too ;
Kind Combinations seldom miss,
Let's try what we can do.

The Extravagant

I AM a lusty, lively Lad
Arriv'd at One and Twenty,
My Father left me all he had,
Both Gold and Silver plenty.
Now he's in Grave, I will be brave,
The Ladies shall adore me :
I'll court and kiss, what Harm's in this ?
My Dad did so before me.

Sir Charles Sedley

My Father to get my Estate,
Though selfish yet was slavish ;
I'll spend it at another Rate,
And be as lewdly lavish.
From Madmen, Fools and Knaves he did
Litigiously receive it ;
If so he did Justice forbid,
But I to such should leave it.

Then I'll to Court, where Venus' Sport
Doth revel it in Plenty,
And deal with all both great and small
From Twelve to Five and Twenty.
In Playhouses I'll spend my Days,
For there are Store of Misses—
Ladies, make Room, behold I come
To purchase many Kisses.

The Forward Lover

TUSH ! never tell me I'm too young
For loving, or too green ;
She stays at least seven Years too long,
That's wedded at Eighteen.
Lambs bring forth Lambs, and Doves bring Doves,
As soon as they're begotten :
Then why should ladies linger Loves,
As if not ripe till rotten ?

Grey Hairs are fitter for the Grave
Than for the bridal Bed,
What Pleasure can a Lover have
In a wither'd Maidenhead ?
Nature's exalted in our Time,
And what our Grandames then
At Four and Twenty scarce could climb,
We can arrive at Ten.

Sir Charles Sedley

AH, Chloris ! that I now could sit
As unconcern'd, as when
Your infant Beauty could beget
No Pleasure nor no Pain.

When I the Dawn used to admire,
And praised the coming Day,
I little thought the growing Fire
Must take my Rest away.

Your Charms in harmless Childhood lay,
Like Metals in the Mine :
Age from no Face took more away,
Than Youth conceal'd in thine.

But as your Charms insensibly
To their Perfection press'd,
Fond Love as unperceiv'd did fly,
And in my Bosom rest.

My Passion with your Beauty grew,
And Cupid at my Heart,
Still as his Mother favour'd you,
Threw a new flaming Dart.

Each gloried in their wanton Part ;
To make a Lover, he
Employ'd the utmost of his Art—
To make a Beauty she.

Though now I slowly bend to Love,
Uncertain of my Fate,
If your fair Self my Chains approve,
I shall my Freedom hate.

Lovers, like dying Men, may well
At first disorder'd be ;
Since none alive can truly tell
What Fortune they must see.

Sir Charles Sedley

LOVE still has something of the Sea,
From whence his Mother rose,
No Time his Slaves from Doubt can free,
Nor give their Thoughts Repose.

They are becalm'd in clearest Days,
And in rough Weather tost ;
They wither under cold Delays,
Or are in Tempests lost.

One while they seem to touch the Port,
Then straight into the Main
Some angry Wind in cruel Sport
The Vessel drives again.

At first Disdain and Pride they fear,
Which, if they chance to 'scape,
Rivals and Falsehood soon appear
In a more dreadful Shape.

By such Degrees to Joy they come,
And are so long withstood,
So slowly they receive the Sum,
It hardly does them good.

'Tis cruel to prolong a Pain,
And to defer a Joy,
Believe me, gentle Celemene
Offends the winged Boy.

An hundred thousand Oaths your Fears
Perhaps would not remove,
And if I gazed a thousand years
I could no deeper love.

FAIR Aminta, art thou mad
To let the World in me
Envy Joys I never had,
And censure them in thee?

Sir Charles Sedley

Fill'd with Grief for what is past,
Let us at length be wise,
And to Love's true Enjoyments haste
Since we have paid the Price.

Love does easy Souls despise,
Who lose themselves for Toys,
And Escape for those devise,
Who taste his utmost Joys.

Love should, like the Year, be crown'd
With sweet Variety ;
Hope should in the Spring abound,
Kind Fears and Jealousie.

In the Summer Flow'rs should rise
And in the Autumn Fruit ;
His Spring doth else but mock our Eyes,
And in a Scoff salute.

Advice to the Old Beaux

SCRAPE no more your harmless Chins
Old Beaux in Hope to please ;
You should repent your former Sins,
Not study their Increase :
*Young awkward Tops may shock our Sight
But you offend by Day and Night.*

In vain the Coachman turns about
And whips the dappled Bays,
When the old Ogler looks out
We turn away our Face.
*True Love and Youth will ever charm
But, both affected, cannot warm.*

Sir Charles Sedley

Summer Fruits we highly prize,
They kindly cool the Blood ;
But Winter Berries we despise,
And leave 'em in the Wood :
On the Bush they may look well,
But, gather'd, lose both Taste and Smell.

That you languish, that you die,
Alas ! is but too true :
Yet tax us not with Cruelty,
Who daily pity you.
Nature henceforth alone accuse,
In vain we grant, if she refuse.

NOT, Celia, that I juster am
Or better than the Rest,
For I would change each Hour like them
Were not my Heart at Rest.

But I am tied to very thee
By every Thought I have,
Thy Face I only care to see,
Thy Heart I only crave.

All that in Woman is ador'd
In thy dear Self I find,
For the whole Sex can but afford
The handsome and the kind.

Why then should I seek farther Store,
And still make Love anew ?
When Change itself can give no more
'Tis easy to be true.

John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester

ALL my past Life is mine no more,
The flying Hours are gone ;
Like transitory Dreams giv'n o'er
Whose Images are kept in Store
By Memory alone.

The Time that is to come is not,
How can it then be mine,
The present Moment's all my Lot,
And that, as fast as it is got,
Is, Phillis, only thine.

Then talk not of Inconstancy,
False Hearts and broken Vows,
If I by Miracle can be
This live-long Minute, true to thee,
'Tis all that Heav'n allows.

To Corinna

WHAT cruel Pains Corinna takes,
To force that harmless Frown,
When not one Charm her Face forsakes
Love cannot lose his own.

John Wilmot

So sweet a Face, so soft a Heart,
Such Eyes so very kind,
Betray, alas ! the silly Art
Virtue had ill-design'd.

Poor feeble Tyrant ! who in vain
Would proudly take upon her
Against kind Nature to maintain
Officious Rules of Honour.

The scorn she bears so helpless proves
When I plead Passion to her,
That much she fears (but more she loves)
Her Vassal should undo her.

ROOM, Room for a Blade of the Town
That takes Delight in Roaring,
Who all Day long rambles up and down,
And at night in the Streets lies snoring.

That for the noble Name of Spark
Does his Companions rally,
Commits an Outrage in the Dark,
Then slinks into an Alley.

To every Female that he meets,
He swears he bears Affection,
Defies all Laws, Arrests and Cheats
By the Help of a kind Protection.

When he intending further Wrongs
By some resenting Cully,
Is decently run through the Lungs,
And there's an End of Bully.

AN Age in her Embraces past
Would seem a Winter's Day,
Where Light and Life with envious Haste
Are torn and snatcht away.

John Wilmot

But oh how slowly Minutes roll
When absent from her Eyes
That fed my Love which is my Soul,
It languishes and dies.

For then no more a Soul but Shade,
It mournfully doth move,
And haunts my Breast, by Absence made
The living Tomb of Love.

You wiser Men, despise me not,
Whose Love-sick Fancy raves
On Shades of Souls and Heav'n knows what,
Short Ages live in Graves :

Whene'er those wounding Eyes, so full
Of Sweetness, you did see,
Had you not been profoundly dull,
You had gone mad like me.

Phillis, be gentler, I advise,
Make up for Time mis-spent,
When Beauty on her Death-bed lies,
'Tis high Time to repent.

Such is the Malice of your Fate,
That makes you old so soon,
Your Pleasure ever comes too late
However soon begun.

Think what a wretched thing is she
Whose Stars contrive in Spite.
The Morning of her Love should be
Her fading Beauty's Night.

Then, if to make your Ruin more,
You'll peevishly be coy,
Die with the Scandal of a Whore,
And never know the Joy.

John Wilmot

Nor censure us you who perceive
My Best-Beloved and me
Sigh and lament, complain and grieve :
You think we disagree.

Alas ! 'tis sacred Jealousy
Love raised to an Extreme :
The only Proof 'twixt them and me
We love and do not dream.

Fantastic Fancies fondly move
And in frail Joys believe,
Taking false Pleasure for true Love ;
But Pain can ne'er deceive.

Kind, jealous Doubts, tormenting,
And anxious Cares when past,
Prove our Heart's Treasure fix'd and dear
And make us blest at last.

Grecian Kindness

THE utmost Grace the Greeks could show
When to the Trojans they grew kind,
Was, with their Arms, to let 'em go,
And leave their ling'ring Wives behind ;
They beat the Men and burnt the Town,
Then all the Baggage was their own.

There the kind Deity of Wine
Kiss'd the soft wanton God of Love :
This clapp'd his Wings, that press'd his Vine,
And their best powers united move.
While each brave Greek embraced his Punk,
Lull'd her asleep, and then grew drunk.

John Wilmot

Woman's Honour

LOVE bid me hope, and I obey'd ;
 Phillis continued still unkind :
"Then you may e'en despair," he said,
 "In vain I strive to change her Mind ;

Honour's got in and keeps her Heart,
 Durst he but venture once abroad,
In my own Right I'd take your Part
 And show myself a mightier God.

This huffing Honour domineers
 In Breasts where he alone has Place :
But if true generous Love appears,
 The Hector dares not show his Face.

Let me still languish and complain,
 Be most inhumanly deny'd,
I have some Pleasure in my Pain,
 She can have none with all her Pride.

I fall a Sacrifice to Love,
 She lives a Wretch for Honour's Sake :
Whose Tyrant does most cruel prove,
 The diff'rence is not hard to make.

Consider real Honour then,
 You'll find hers cannot be the same ;
'Tis noble Confidence in Men,
 In Women mean distrustful Shame."

The Fall

How blest was the created State
 Of Man and Woman ere they fell !
Compared to our unhappy Fate ;
 We need not fear another Hell !

John Wilmot

Naked, beneath cool shades, they lay,
Enjoyment waited on Desire,
Each Member did their Wills obey,
Nor could a Wish set Pleasure higher.

But we, poor Slaves to Hope and Fear,
Are never of our Joys secure :
They lessen still as they draw near,
And none but dull Delights endure.

Then, Chloris, while I Duty pay,
The nobler Tribute of my Heart,
Be not you so severe to say
You love me for a frailer Part.

GIVE me Leave to rail at you,
I ask nothing but my due
To call you false and then to say
You shall not keep my Heart a Day.
But, alas ! against my Will,
I must be your Captive still.
Ah, be kinder then, for I
Cannot change and would not die.

Kindness has resistless Charms,
All besides but weakly move,
Fiercest Anger it disarms,
And clips the Wings of flying Love.
Beauty does the Heart invade,
Kindness only can persuade ;
It gilds the Lover's servile chain,
And makes the Slaves grow pleased again.

Upon Leaving his Mistress

'TIS not that I am weary grown
Of being yours and yours alone,
But with what Face can I incline
To damn you to be only mine?

John Wilmot

You, whom some kinder Pow'r did fashion
By Merit and by Inclination
The Joy at least of a whole Nation.

Let meaner Spirits of your Sex
With humbler Aims their Thoughts perplex,
And boast if, by their Arts, they can
Contrive to make *one* happy Man :
While, moved by an impartial Sense,
Favours like Nature you dispense
With universal influence.

See, the kind Seed receiving Earth
To every Grain affords a Birth,
On her no Show'rs unwelcome fall,
Her willing Womb retains 'em all.
And shall my Celia be confin'd ?
No, live up to thy mighty Mind,
And be the Mistress of Mankind !

ABSENT from thee I languish still,
Then ask me not, when I return ?
The straying Fool 'twill plainly kill
To wish all Day, all Night to mourn.

Dear, from thine Arms then let me fly,
That my fantastic Mind may prove
The Torments it deserves to try,
That tears my fixed Heart from my Love.

When, wearied with a World of Woe,
To thy safe Bosom I retire,
Where Love, and Peace, and Honour flow,
May I, contented, there expire.

Lest once more wandering from that Heaven,
I fall on some base Heart unblessed,
Faithless to thee, false, unforgiven,
And lose my everlasting Rest.

John Wilmot

To his Mistress

WHY dost thou shade thy lovely Face ? O why
Does that eclipsing Hand of thine deny
The Sunshine of the Sun's enlightening Eye ?

Without thy Light what Light remains in me ?
Thou art my Life ; my Way, my Light's in thee ;
I live, I move, and by thy Beams I see.

Thou art my Life—if thou but turn away
I die a thousand Deaths. Thou art my Way—
Without thee, Love, I travel not, but stray.

My Light thou art—without thy glorious Sight
My Eyes are darken'd with eternal Night.
My Love, thou art my Way, my Life, my Light.

Thou art my Way ; I wander if thou fly.
Thou art my Light ; if hid how blind am I !
Thou art my Life ; if thou withdraw'st, I die.

My Eyes are dark and blind, I cannot see :
To whom or whither should my Darkness flee,
But to that Light ?—and who's that Light but thee ?

If I have lost my Path, dear Lover, say,
Shall I still wander in a doubtful Way ?
Love, shall a Lamb of Israel's Sheepfold stray ?

My Path is lost, my wandering Steps do stray ;
I cannot go, nor can I safely stay ;
Whom should I seek but thee, my Path, my Way ?

And yet thou turn'st away thy Face and fly'st me !
And yet I sue for Grace and thou deny'st me !
Speak, art thou angry, Love, or only try'st me ?

John Wilmot

Thou art the Pilgrim's Path, the blind Man's Eye,
The dead Man's Life. On thee my Hopes rely :
If I but them remove, I surely die.

Dissolve thy Sunbeams, close thy Wings and stay !
See, see how I am blind, and dead, and stray !
—Oh thou that art my Life, my Light, my Way !

Then work thy Will ! If Passion bid thee flee,
My Reason shall obey, my Wings shall be
Stretch'd out no further than from me to thee !

My dear Mistress has a Heart,
Soft as those kind Looks she gave me,
When with Love's resistless Art
And her Eyes she did enslave me.
But her Constancy's so weak,
She's so wild and apt to wander,
That my jealous Heart would break,
Should we live one day asunder.

Melting Joys about her move,
Killing Pleasures, wounding Blissess,
She can dress her Eyes in Love,
And her Lips can warm with Kisses.
Angels listen when she speaks,
She's my Delight, all Mankind's Wonder,
But my jealous Heart would break,
Should we live one day asunder.

WHILE on those lovely Looks I gaze,
To see a Wretch pursuing,
In Raptures of a blest Amaze
His pleasing happy Ruin ;
'Tis not for Pity that I move,
His Fate is too aspiring,
Whose Heart, broke with a Load of Love,
Dies wishing and admiring.

John Wilmot

But if this Murder you'd forego,
Your Slave from Death removing,
Let me your Art of Charming know,
Or learn you mine of Loving ;
But, whether Death or Life betide,
In Love 'tis equal Measure ;
The Victor lives with empty Pride,
The Vanquish'd die with Pleasure.

A Dialogue

Strephon

PRITHEE, now, fond Fool, give o'er ;
Since my Heart is gone before,
To what Purpose should I stay ?
Love commands another Way.

Daphne

Perjur'd Swain, I knew the Time
When Dissembling was your Crime ;
In Pity now employ that Art,
Which first betray'd, to ease my Heart.

Strephon

Women can with Pleasure feign,
Men dissemble still with Pain.
What Advantage will it prove,
If I lie, who cannot love ?

Daphne

Tell me then the Reason, why
Love from Hearts in Love does fly ?
Why the Bird will build a Nest,
Where she ne'er intends to rest ?

John Wilmot

Strephon

Love, like other little Boys,
Cries for Hearts, as they for Toys,
Which, when gain'd, in childish Play,
Wantonly are thrown away.

Daphne

Still on Wing or on his Knees,
Love does nothing by degrees,
Basely flying when most prized,
Meanly fawning when despised,
Flattering or insulting ever,
Generous and grateful never :
All his Joys are fleeting Dreams,
All his Woes severe Extremes.

Strephon

Nymph, unjustly you inveigh ;
Love, like us, must Fate obey.
Since 'tis Nature's Law to change,
Constancy alone is strange.
See the Heavens in Lightnings break,
Next in storms of Thunder speak,
Till a kind Rain from above
Makes a Calm,—so 'tis in Love.
Flames begin our first Address,
Like meeting Thunder we embrace,
Then, you know, the Showers that fall
Quench the Fire and quiet all.

Daphne

How should I these Showers forget ?
'Twas so pleasant to be wet !
They kill'd Love, I know it well,
I died all the while they fell.
Say, at least, what Nymph it is
Robs my Breast of so much Bliss ?
If she's fair, I shall be eased,
Through my Ruin you'll be pleased.

John Wilmot

Strephon

Daphne never was so fair,
Strephon, scarcely, so sincere,
Gentle, innocent and free,
Ever pleased with only me :
Many Charms my Heart enthrall,
But there's one, above them all,
With Aversion she does fly—
Tedious, trading Constancy.

Daphne

Cruel Shepherd ! I submit,
Do what you and Love think fit :
Change is Fate and not Design,—
Say you would have still been mine.

Strephon

Nymph, I cannot : 'tis too true,
Change has greater Charms than you.
Be by my Example wise,
Faith to Pleasure sacrifice.

Daphne

Silly Swain, I'll have you know
'Twas my Practice long ago,
Whilst you vainly thought me true,
I was false in Scorn of you.
By my Tears, my Heart's Disguise,
I thy Love and thee despise :
Womankind more Joy discovers
Making Fools than making Lovers.

Upon Drinking in a Bowl

VULCAN, contrive me such a Cup
As Nestor used of Old,
Show all thy Skill to trim it up,
Damask it round with Gold.

John Wilmot

Make it so large, that, fill'd with Sack
Up to the swelling Brim,
Vast Toasts on the delicious Lake,
Like Ships at Sea, may swim.

Engrave not Battle on his Cheek,
With War I've nought to do,
I'm none of those that took Maestrick,
Nor Yarmouth Leaguer knew.

Let it no Name of Planets tell,
Fix'd Stars and Constellations ;
For I am no Sir Sidrophel,
Nor none of his Relations.

But carve thereon a spreading Vine,
Then add two lovely Boys ;
Their Limbs in amorous Folds entwine,
The Type of future Joys.

Cupid and Bacchus my Saints are,
May Drink and Love still reign !
With Wine I wash away my Care,
And then to Love again !

Upon Nothing

Nothing ! thou Elder Brother ev'n to Shade,
That hadst a Being ere the World was made,
And (well fixt) art alone, of Ending not afraid.

Ere Time and Place were, Time and Place were not,
When primitive Nothing something straight begot,
Then all proceeded from the great united . . . What ?

Something, the general Attribute of all,
Sever'd from thee, its sole Original,
Into thy boundless Self must undistinguish'd fall.

John Wilmot

Yet Something did thy mighty Power command,
And from fruitful Emptiness's Hand
Snatch'd Men, Beasts, Birds, Fire, Air, and Land.

Matter the wicked'st Offspring of thy Race,
By Form assisted, flew from thy Embrace,
And rebel Light obscur'd thy reverend dusky Face.

With Form and Matter, Time and Place did join ;
Body, thy Foe, with thee did Leagues combine
To spoil thy peaceful Realm, and ruin all thy Line.

But Turn-coat Time assists the Foe in vain,
And, brib'd by thee, assists thy short-liv'd Reign,
And to thy hungry Womb drives back thy Slaves again.

Though Mysteries are barr'd from laic Eyes,
And the Divine alone, with Warrant, pries
Into thy Bosom where Truth in private lies :

Yet this of thee the Wise may freely say,
Thou from the Virtuous nothing tak'st away,
And, to be Part with thee, the Wicked wisely pray.

Great Negative ! how vainly would the Wise
Enquire, define, distinguish, teach, devise,
Didst thou not stand to point their dull philosophies ?

Is, or is not, the Two great Ends of Fate,
And, true or false, the Subject of Debate,
That perfect or destroy the vast Designs of Fate ;

When they have rack'd the Politician's Breast,
Within thy Bosom most securely rest,
And, when reduced to thee, are least unsafe and best ?

But *Nothing*,—why does *Something* still permit
That sacred Monarchs should at Council sit,
With Persons highly thought at best for Nothing fit ?

John Wilmot

Whilst weighty *Something* modestly abstains
From Princes' Coffers and from Statesmen's Brains,
And Nothing there, like stately Nothing, reigns.

Nothing who dwell'st with Fools in grave disguise
For whom they reverend Shapes and Forms devise.
Lawn Sleeves, and Furs, and Gowns, when they, like
thee, look wise.

French Truth, Dutch Prowess, British Policy,
Hibernian Learning, Scotch Civility,
Spaniards' Dispatch, Danes' Wit, are mainly seen in
thee.

The great Man's Gratitude to his best Friend,
Kings' Promises, Whores' vows, towards thee may
bend,
How swiftly into thee, and in thee ever end.

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